

# Coalition aims to derail new

By Candace Krebs,  
Regional Correspondent

HUGO, Colo. — A coalition is forming to oppose a plan to move more unit coal trains off of rail lines along the Front Range and onto a proposed new freight route on the Eastern plains.

An organizational meeting of Citizens Against Rail Relocation (CARR) is planned for 6 p.m. July 30th at the Genoa-Hugo school in Hugo.

Many farmers and ranchers in Bent, Kiowa, Cheyenne, Lincoln, Washington, Morgan, Elbert, Adams and Arapahoe counties are potentially in the path of the plans for a new track that would accommodate 85 percent of interstate rail freight currently routed through Front Range cities. The specific route is still under consideration.

Property owners fear the proposed tracks would mean new headaches, safety issues and property value considerations.

"You're going to split up pastures and fields and end up with pieces of land that aren't very useful," says John Reid, a rancher from Ordway, Colo.

He says the Front Range

stands to benefit from the proposal — called Rail Relocation for Colorado's Communities, or R2C2 — to the tune of \$4 billion, while all of the downside gets exported to the plains.

R2C2 is a joint proposal and a public-private partnership between the Colorado Department of Transportation, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, Union Pacific Railroad and the Regional Transportation District. The new north-south rail corridor under consid-

eration would primarily handle coal shipments moving between the Powder River Basin and Texas.

Moving coal trains east is a popular idea in Colorado because it would open up the Front Range to commuter rail, with the potential to add a high-speed line between Pueblo and Denver.

Richard Orphan, who works in the traffic engineering department at Ft. Carson in Colorado Springs says with 17,500 troops already stationed there and another 12,500 expected to arrive by 2013, more commuter rail service is attractive for its potential to reduce automobile traffic.

Governor Bill Ritter has also expressed support for the proposal.



John Reid



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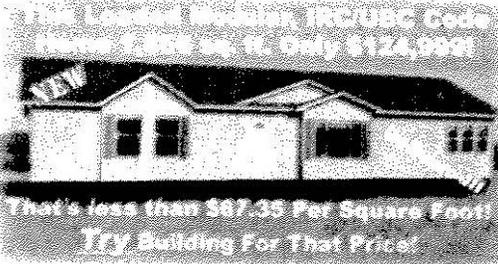
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3-400#	\$116.00 - \$126.00
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